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*Stone Head of Bodhisattva, from Shansi, Sixth to Seventh Century A.D.*

*Height: 1 foot 2 inches*

### Special Exhibition of Recent Acquisitions by the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art

EARLY in February the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art will open, in the two forecourt rooms hitherto devoted to Classical casts, a special exhibition of objects recently acquired through the generosity of Mrs. W. Scott Fitz, Dr. Denman W. Ross, and other friends of the Museum. Owing to the limited space at its disposal, the Department will be able at this time to show in part only its recent acquisitions: all the more important pieces, however, will be on exhibition.

Among these will be a bronze bell 2 feet 4½ inches in height by 4 feet 7 inches in circumference. This magnificent example of the founder's art was dug up about two hundred years ago in the province of Shansi, where was situate the capital of China during the three dynasties preceding that of Chow (B. C. 1122–B. C. 220). Probably it once constituted part of a set used in double octave during services at the "Altar of Heaven." Comparing it with somewhat similar bells of the Chow Dynasty in the Imperial Sung (A.D. 960–1260) and Chien Lung (1736–1795) collections, as well as with those described and reproduced by several eminent Chinese collectors and archæol-

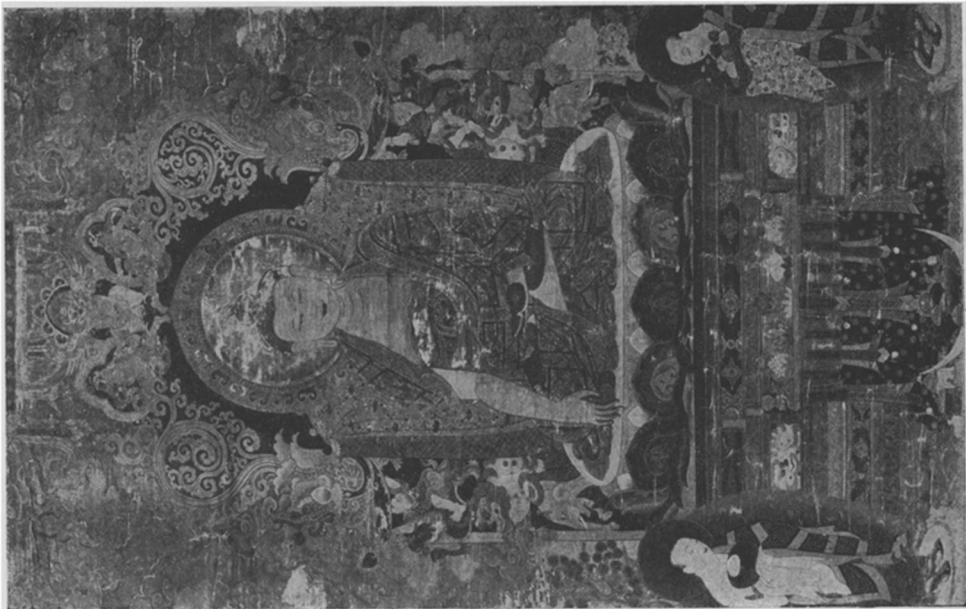
ogists, we find in it a freedom of treatment, both in form and decoration, which strongly suggests its having been cast at an earlier period, when tradition had not yet crystallized into convention. On either face is a double panel divided by a middle section on which is impressed a small diaper cloud (?) pattern. Within these panels are thirty-six bosses arranged in parallel sets of three, each boss, as well as the two sounding bosses near the base of the bell, being formed of a spirally coiled serpent dragon. Below the double panels on the face of the bell, and also upon each side of its flat top, are other panels, determined by a raised twisted rope line. Within these, and also between the bosses in the double panels, is a very interesting rectilinear pattern suggestive of the "swastika" motive and possibly caligraphic in character. The suspension cannon is formed by the convolutions of two large dragons, upon whose bodies the rectilinear pattern is repeated, and a number of small dragons with naturalistically treated scales. The entire surface of the bell is covered with a green and reddish patina, which in many places is overlaid by earthy incrustations, whose careful removal should disclose additional beauties of detail and surface.

Among other important objects shown will be a number of Chinese mortuary stone tablets,



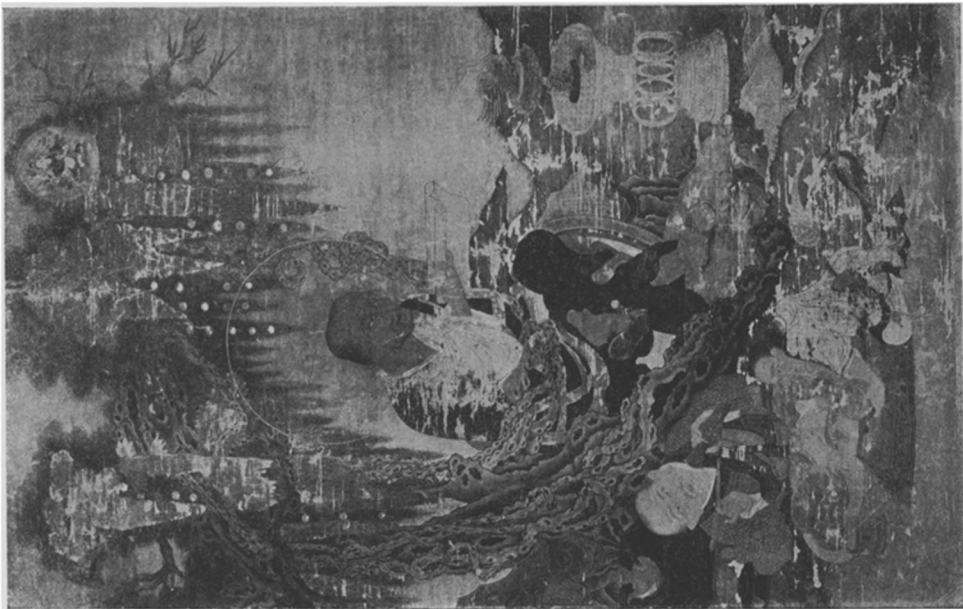
*Bronze Bell from Shansi, earlier than 1000 B.C.*

*Height : 2 feet 4¼ inches*



*Amida Buddha*

*Sino-Tibetan Paintings, probably about Fourteenth Century A.D. Height : 2 feet 7½ inches*



*Rakon*



*Kwannon, Japanese Wooden Sculpture  
Seventh Century A.D. Height: 2 feet 5 inches*

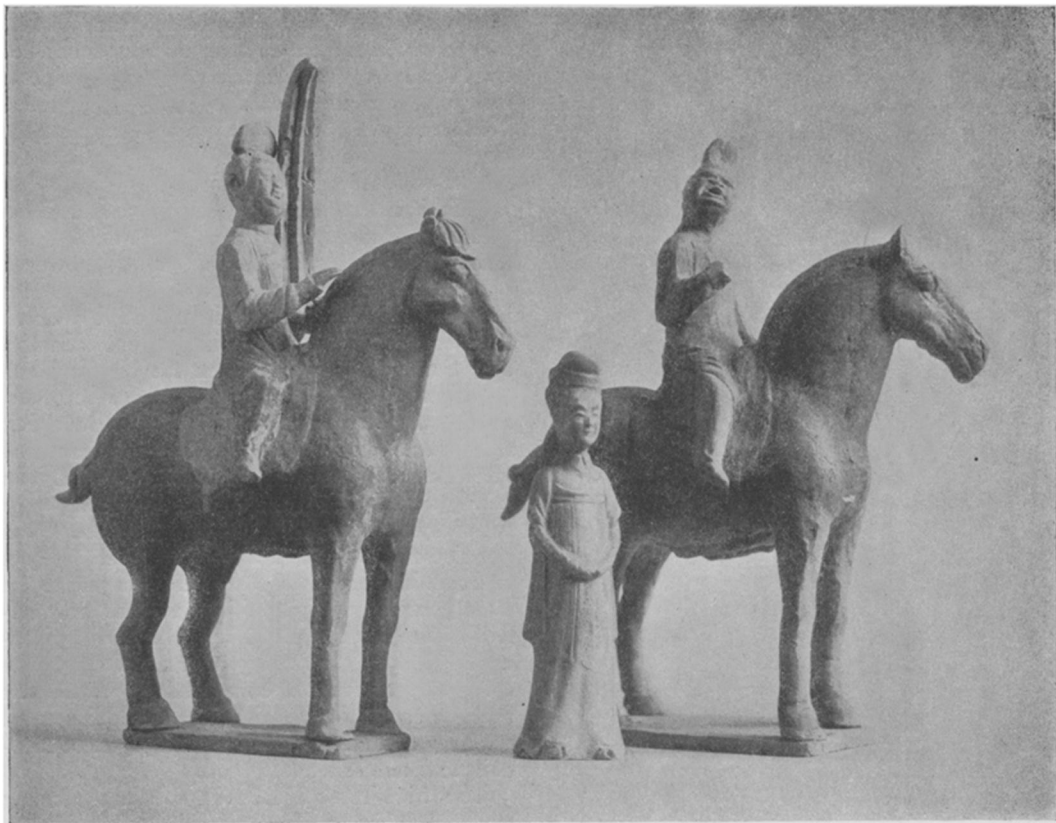
several colossal stone heads, and other sculpture of the sixth and seventh centuries, so-called "Han" burial figures of glazed and unglazed terra-cotta, probably dating from a slightly later period, some very interesting examples of Japanese wooden sculpture, including a Kwannon of the seventh century, and a number of Chinese and Japanese paintings.

The marble Buddha, here reproduced, may well take rank beside the superb marble torso of Kwannon acquired by the Museum some years ago, and now placed in the First Chinese Room in the Japanese wing. Like the Kwannon, it probably dates from the seventh century, and shows the noble dignity and refinement which the Indian school acquired at the hands of its Chinese followers. It is in general the wont of Western critics to find in

such examples as this a "Greek influence" which they trace through the Bactrian colonies established by Alexander the Great, an influence palpably recognizable in the so-called Gandara sculpture of Northern India. It is, however, a far cry from the Bactrian colonies of the fourth century B. C. to the interior of seventh century China, especially when we find in such examples as the present a far higher refinement of idealism than is anywhere discoverable among the Gandara sculptures. When, however, we come to study, first, the rich and voluptuous lines of Indian sculpture uninfluenced by Greek traditions, as in the decorations of the Bharahat and Sanchi Topes, and then the dignified and monumental severity of Chinese classical sculpture, as shown in the friezes of ancient pre-Buddhistic rock temples or in some of the Taoist mortuary tablets in the Museum collection, we find two widely differing influences whose interaction upon each other might well have produced the grand result before us. Like nearly all the other examples of Buddhist work in the Museum belonging to the same period and region, this figure has sadly suffered at the hands of, probably Mohammedan, iconoclastic zealots. It is interesting to note the presence of the sacred Brahmin cord passing over the left shoulder and under the right arm, an Indian detail generally omitted from Chinese and Japanese Buddhist sculpture of a later period.

The Sino-Tibetan Lamaist paintings, recently mounted in screen form, are quite unique in style and exceedingly rich in their harmonious color schemes of varying blue, green, and red picked out with gold. They were taken from the Lamasey of the Summer Palace when it was sacked by the French in 1860, and probably date from the Yuan Dynasty (1280-1368), when from political motives Lamaism was adopted as the state religion of China and Lamaist art reached its highest development. The Museum possesses six of these paintings, one representing the Buddha on his throne and the others Rakan or disciples of the Holy One. Three others of the set, which probably consisted originally of nineteen pieces (the Buddha, sixteen Indian and two added Chinese Rakan,) are owned by friends of the Museum.

In the cases between the windows and against the end walls are shown a number of terra-cotta figurines, animals, etc., recently exhumed during the construction of new railway lines. These figures, known in Europe as "Han Tanagras," but probably of a slightly later period, were doubtless used in China, as in other lands, as burial substitutes for the sacrificial victims of an earlier age, when it was held that the spirit of the master must be accompanied to the next world by a concourse fit for his service and delectation. In fashion, they are of great variety, some being cast from moulds and others modelled by hand; some covered with painted slip and others overlaid partially or in whole by one or more vitrified glazes. In subject, they range from learned councillors and potent warriors down to



*Chinese Terra-cotta Grave Figures, probably about Fourth Century A.D.*

dwarf jesters ; from noble ladies clad in the hobble skirts of the period to slatternly scullery wenches ; from the chieftain's steed to the humble hen ; in short, they bring vividly before us the entire daily life and custom of the period, and have therefore, in addition to their artistic interest, a great ethnological and historical value.

F. G. C.

### Print Rooms

*Exhibition of Mezzotint Engravings by and after J. M. W. Turner*

ALL devotees of Turner, all lovers of really fine prints, all admirers of mezzotints, will join in welcoming the exhibition of mezzotints by and after J. M. W. Turner now open in the Print Rooms. Those who cultivate the excellent habit of visiting the Print Rooms on the ground floor of the Museum may have derived enjoyment during the last months from the selection of English and other mezzotints which form part of the Museum's own collection. But for sheer beauty of impressions, for the gorgeous effect of the exhibition as a whole, the material there shown pales before the plates which now fill the cases. The Boston public remains unaware of the treasures of art possessed and enjoyed by private collectors in this community, until an exhibition like the present Turner show reveals to the art lover the splendid results brought about by years of patient, careful collecting. No museum here or abroad owns a set of Turner prints of the uniform excellence here shown, fully equalling, if not excelling, the greatest Turner collections of the world.

Unlike the painter who cannot stop his picture at various stages of completion and at the same time carry it to the utmost perfection within his power, the artist who expresses his art on the copper plate can print and thereby perpetuate — in proofs



*Chinese Terra-cotta Grave Figures*